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Special Political and Decolonization Committee (Fourth Committee)

Summary record of the 7th meeting
Held at Headquarters, New York, on Friday, 8 October 1999, at 10 a.m.

Chairman: Mr. Zackheos ..... (Cyprus)

Contents

Agenda item 18: Implementation of the Declaration on the Granting of Independence to Colonial Countries and Peoples (Territories not covered under other agenda items)* (*continued*)

Agenda item 92: Information from Non-Self-Governing Territories transmitted under Article 73 *e* of the Charter of the United Nations* (*continued*)

Agenda item 93: Economic and other activities which affect the interests of the peoples of the Non-Self-Governing Territories* (*continued*)

Agenda item 94: Implementation of the Declaration on the Granting of Independence to Colonial Countries and Peoples by the specialized agencies and the international institutions associated with the United Nations* (*continued*)

Agenda item 12: Report of the Economic and Social Council* (*continued*)

Agenda item 95: Offers by Member States of study and training facilities for inhabitants of Non-Self-Governing Territories* (*continued*)

* Items which the Committee has decided to consider together.

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The meeting was called to order at 10.10 a.m.

Agenda item 18: Implementation of the Declaration on the Granting of Independence to Colonial Countries and Peoples (Territories not covered under other agenda items) (*continued*)

Agenda item 92: Information from Non-Self-Governing Territories transmitted under Article 73 *e* of the Charter of the United Nations (*continued*)

Agenda item 93: Economic and other activities which affect the interests of the peoples of the Non-Self-Governing Territories (*continued*)

Agenda item 94: Implementation of the Declaration on the Granting of Independence to Colonial Countries and Peoples by the specialized agencies and the international institutions associated with the United Nations (*continued*)

Agenda item 12: Report of the Economic and Social Council (*continued*)

Agenda item 95: Offers by Member States of study and training facilities for inhabitants of Non-Self-Governing Territories (*continued*)

Draft resolution on information from Non-Self-Governing Territories transmitted under Article 73 e of the Charter of the United Nations, submitted under agenda item 92 (A/54/23 (Part III), chap. XIII, sect. A)

1. **Mr. Duffy** (United States of America), speaking in explanation of vote before the vote, said that, as in the previous seven years, the American delegation would abstain in the vote on the draft resolution because the General Assembly expressed its own view therein as to whether those Territories had attained self-government. The United States considered that it was for the administering Power itself to determine whether its obligations under Article 73 *e* of the Charter had ceased.

2. *A recorded vote was taken.*

In favour:

Algeria, Andorra, Argentina, Armenia, Australia, Austria, Azerbaijan, Bahamas, Bahrain, Belgium, Bolivia, Brazil, Brunei Darussalam, Cameroon, Canada, Chile, China, Colombia, Costa Rica, Croatia, Cuba, Cyprus, Czech Republic, Democratic People's Republic of Korea, Denmark, Djibouti, Ecuador, Egypt, El Salvador, Finland, Germany, Ghana, Guatemala, Guinea, Guyana, Haiti, Hungary, India, Indonesia, Iran (Islamic Republic of), Ireland, Italy, Jamaica, Japan, Kazakhstan, Kuwait, Lao People's Democratic Republic, Libyan Arab Jamahiriya, Luxembourg, Maldives, Malta, Mexico, Myanmar, Namibia, Netherlands, New Zealand, Norway, Oman, Pakistan, Panama, Papua New Guinea, Paraguay, Peru, Poland, Portugal, Qatar, Republic of Korea, Romania, Saint Lucia, San Marino, Saudi Arabia, Senegal, Singapore, South Africa, Spain, Sweden, Syrian Arab Republic, Thailand, Tunisia, Turkey, Ukraine, United Republic of Tanzania, Uzbekistan, Yemen.

Against:

None.

Abstaining:

France, Israel, Monaco, United Kingdom of Great Britain and Northern Ireland, United States of America.

3. *The draft resolution was adopted by 84 votes to none, with 5 abstentions.*

4. **Ms. Bamber** (United Kingdom) said that, as in previous years, the United Kingdom had abstained in the vote on the draft resolution. The United Kingdom did not take issue with the main aim of the draft resolution and would continue to comply fully with its obligations in respect of its overseas Territories.

5. However, the final decision as to whether a Non-Self-Governing Territory had reached a level of self-government sufficient to relieve the administering Power of its obligation to submit information under Article 73 *e* of the Charter rested with the Government of the Territory concerned and the administering Power, not the General Assembly.

Draft resolution on economic and other activities which affect the interests of the peoples of the Non-Self-Governing Territories, submitted under agenda items 93 and 18 (A/54/23 (Part III), chap. XIII, sect. B)

6. **Mr. Duffy** (United States of America) proposed the deletion from the draft resolution under consideration of paragraph 7. The United States did not agree with the implication in the draft resolution that the very existence of foreign economic activity was an obstacle to the self-determination of Non-Self-Governing Territories. The text of the resolution had improved in recent years, but the United States would be forced to vote against it unless paragraph 7 was omitted or amended. There was no need for that paragraph, since the causes for concern were referred to in paragraphs 4 and 5. Furthermore, the paragraph implied that such activity was taking place continuously in all Territories that had not attained self-government. Illegal

fishing was damaging wherever it took place, yet paragraph 7 stated that such activity was somehow especially damaging for Non-Self-Governing Territories. The United States rejected such an assertion.

7. **Mr. Sattar** (Secretary of the Committee) said that, at the request of the United States, a separate vote would be taken on paragraph 7 of the draft resolution. Those delegations that supported the retention of paragraph 7 should vote "in favour", while those that supported its deletion should vote "against".

8. *A recorded vote was taken on paragraph 7.*

In favour:

Algeria, Argentina, Bahamas, Belarus, Benin, Bolivia, Brazil, Brunei Darussalam, Cambodia, Cameroon, Chile, China, Colombia, Costa Rica, Côte d'Ivoire, Cuba, Democratic People's Republic of Korea, Djibouti, Ecuador, Egypt, Ghana, Guinea, Guyana, India, Indonesia, Iran (Islamic Republic of), Jamaica, Lao People's Democratic Republic, Libyan Arab Jamahiriya, Mexico, Myanmar, Namibia, Nepal, Oman, Pakistan, Panama, Papua New Guinea, Paraguay, Peru, Philippines, Russian Federation, Saint Lucia, Singapore, South Africa, Syrian Arab Republic, Thailand, Tunisia, United Republic of Tanzania, Venezuela, Yemen, Zambia, Zimbabwe.

Against:

Israel, United Kingdom of Great Britain and Northern Ireland, United States of America.

Abstaining:

Andorra, Armenia, Australia, Austria, Belgium, Canada, Croatia, Cyprus, Czech Republic, Denmark, Finland, France, Georgia, Germany, Guatemala, Haiti, Hungary, Ireland, Italy, Japan, Kazakhstan, Lithuania, Luxembourg, Malta, Monaco, Netherlands, New Zealand, Norway, Poland, Portugal, Republic of Korea, Romania, San Marino, Spain, Sweden, Turkey, Ukraine, Uzbekistan.

9. *Paragraph 7 of the draft resolution was retained by 52 votes to 3, with 38 abstentions.*

10. *A recorded vote was taken on the draft resolution as a whole.*

In favour:

Algeria, Andorra, Argentina, Armenia, Australia, Austria, Azerbaijan, Bahamas, Bahrain, Belarus, Belgium, Benin, Bolivia, Botswana, Brazil, Brunei Darussalam, Cambodia, Cameroon, Canada, Chile, China, Colombia, Costa Rica, Côte d'Ivoire, Croatia, Cuba, Cyprus, Czech Republic, Democratic People's Republic of Korea, Denmark, Djibouti, Ecuador, Egypt, El Salvador, Finland, Germany, Ghana, Greece, Guatemala, Guinea, Guyana, Haiti, Hungary, India, Indonesia, Iran (Islamic Republic of), Ireland, Italy, Jamaica, Japan, Kazakhstan, Kuwait, Lao People's Democratic Republic, Libyan Arab Jamahiriya, Lithuania, Luxembourg, Madagascar, Malaysia, Maldives, Malta, Mexico, Myanmar, Namibia, Nepal, Netherlands, New Zealand, Norway, Oman, Pakistan, Panama, Papua New Guinea, Paraguay, Peru, Philippines, Poland, Portugal, Qatar, Republic of Korea, Romania, Saint Lucia, San Marino, Saudi Arabia, Singapore, South Africa, Spain, Sweden, Syrian Arab Republic, Thailand, Tunisia, Turkey, Ukraine, United Republic of Tanzania, Uzbekistan, Venezuela, Yemen, Zambia, Zimbabwe.

Against:

Israel, United States of America.

Abstaining:

France, Monaco, United Kingdom of Great Britain and Northern Ireland.

11. *The draft resolution was adopted by 97 votes to 2, with 3 abstentions.*

12. **Mr. Islam** (Pakistan), speaking on a point of order, noted that the number of delegations participating in the voting on the first two resolutions in 1999 was 60 per cent lower than in the previous year. In 1998, the first resolution had been adopted by 156 votes to 2, with 5 abstentions. As for the second resolution, in 1998 it had received 154 votes. His delegation was concerned at the drop in those figures, which might be accounted for by the unfortunate scheduling that resulted in the absence of many delegations from the meeting. There was a need to consider what a poor impression such a situation gave of the Committee's readiness to concern itself with the matters before it.

13. **Mr. Sinha** (India) said that, according to his data, in the previous year the following votes had been cast: 116 votes for the adoption of the first resolution, none against and 5 abstentions; 60 votes in favour of the retention of paragraph 7, 42 against and 3 abstentions; 120 votes in favour of the second resolution as a whole, 2 against and 3 abstentions. He shared the concern of the representative of Pakistan at the decrease in the number of those present and participating in the vote, although he did not consider that decrease so significant.

14. **The Chairman** said that the voting was being conducted in accordance with the rules and would continue.

Draft decision relating to military activities and arrangements by colonial Powers in Territories under their administration, submitted under agenda items 93 and 80 (A/54/23 (Part III), chap. XIII, sect. H)

15. *A recorded vote was taken.*

In favour:

Algeria, Argentina, Bahamas, Bahrain, Benin, Bolivia, Botswana, Brazil, Brunei Darussalam, Cambodia, Cameroon, Chile, China, Colombia, Costa Rica, Côte d'Ivoire, Cuba, Cyprus, Democratic People's Republic of Korea, Djibouti, Ecuador, Egypt, El Salvador, Ghana, Guinea, Guyana, Haiti, India, Indonesia, Iran (Islamic Republic of), Jamaica, Kuwait, Lao People's Democratic Republic, Libyan Arab Jamahiriya, Madagascar, Malaysia, Maldives, Mexico, Myanmar, Namibia, Nepal, Oman, Pakistan, Panama, Papua New Guinea, Paraguay, Peru, Philippines, Qatar, Saint Lucia, Saudi Arabia, Singapore, South Africa, Syrian Arab Republic, Thailand, Tunisia, United Republic of Tanzania, Venezuela, Yemen, Zambia, Zimbabwe.

Against:

Andorra, Armenia, Australia, Austria, Belgium, Canada, Croatia, Czech Republic, Denmark, Finland, France, Georgia, Germany, Greece, Hungary, Ireland, Israel, Italy, Japan, Kazakhstan, Lithuania, Luxembourg, Malta, Monaco, Netherlands, New Zealand, Norway, Poland, Portugal, Republic of Korea, Romania, Russian Federation, San Marino, Spain, Sweden, Turkey, Ukraine, United Kingdom of Great Britain and Northern Ireland, United States of America, Uzbekistan.

Abstaining:

Belarus.

16. *The draft decision was adopted by 61 votes to 40, with 1 abstention.*

17. **Ms. Sall** (Finland), speaking on behalf of the European Union, said that the European Union acknowledged the progress made in the work of the Special Committee on Decolonization and hoped that it would continue to ensure that texts it submitted were balanced in order to secure the widest support. The European Union reiterated its support for the adoption — without a vote for the second consecutive year — of the omnibus resolution on small territories and welcomed the progress towards greater consensus on the resolution relating to economic activities.

18. Unfortunately, as in previous years, the European Union was compelled to reiterate its objections to the draft decision on military activities, since the issue did not fall within its competence. For that reason, the member States of the European Union had voted against the draft decision.

19. **Mr. Duffy** (United States of America) said that the United States had voted against the draft decision because it did not agree with the premise on which it was based, namely that the very existence of military activities in Non-Self-Governing Territories violated their right to self-determination. The right to self-defence was acknowledged in the Charter of the United Nations. Moreover, it was widely acknowledged that States had the right to develop collective security systems. Accordingly, it was in that particular light that situations in the Territories should be viewed.

20. **Mr. Thapa** (Nepal), **Mr. Tanoh Boutchoué** (Côte d'Ivoire), **Mr. Maulion** (Philippines), **Mr. Bliznikas** (Lithuania), **Mr. Sun Swon** (Cambodia), **Mr. Contreras** (Venezuela), **Mr. Ntakhwana** (Botswana), **Mr. Lyberopoulos** (Greece), **Mr. Ledenev** (Russian Federation), **Mr. Matchavariani** (Georgia), **Mr. Ali** (Malaysia), **Mr. Chekenyere** (Zimbabwe), **Mr. Mubebo** (Zambia), **Mr. Stanislaus** (Grenada), **Ms. Otiti** (Uganda), **Mr. Nkingiye** (Burundi) and **Mr. Bantole** (Benin) said that if their delegations had been present for the vote on the draft resolution on information relating to Non-Self-Governing Territories submitted in accordance with article 73 *e* of the Charter of the United Nations, they would have voted in favour.

Draft resolution relating to implementation of the Declaration on the Granting of Independence to Colonial Countries and Peoples by the specialized agencies, submitted under agenda items 94 and 12 (A/54/23 (Part III), chap. XIII, sect. C)

21. **Mr. Duffy** (United States of America), speaking in explanation of vote before the vote, said that his delegation would abstain; it believed that the draft resolution was unnecessary and that it inappropriately linked the work of the specialized agencies and other organizations to the Declaration on the Granting of Independence to Colonial Countries and Peoples. Those agencies needed no guidelines other than those contained in their mandates.

22. *A recorded vote was taken.*

In favour:

Algeria, Argentina, Armenia, Australia, Azerbaijan, Bahamas, Bahrain, Belarus, Benin, Bolivia, Botswana, Brazil, Brunei Darussalam, Cambodia, Cameroon, Chile, China, Colombia, Costa Rica, Côte d'Ivoire, Cuba, Democratic People's Republic of Korea, Djibouti, Ecuador, Egypt, Ghana, Grenada, Guinea,

Guyana, Haiti, India, Indonesia, Iran (Islamic Republic of), Jamaica, Kuwait, Lao People's Democratic Republic, Libyan Arab Jamahiriya, Madagascar, Malaysia, Maldives, Mali, Mexico, Myanmar, Namibia, Nepal, New Zealand, Oman, Pakistan, Panama, Papua New Guinea, Paraguay, Peru, Philippines, Qatar, Saint Lucia, Saudi Arabia, Singapore, South Africa, Syrian Arab Republic, Thailand, Tunisia, Uganda, United Republic of Tanzania, Venezuela, Yemen, Zambia, Zimbabwe.

Against:

None.

Abstaining:

Andorra, Austria, Belgium, Canada, Croatia, Cyprus, Czech Republic, Denmark, Finland, France, Georgia, Germany, Greece, Guatemala, Hungary, Ireland, Israel, Italy, Japan, Kazakhstan, Lithuania, Luxembourg, Malta, Monaco, Netherlands, Norway, Poland, Portugal, Republic of Korea, Romania, Russian Federation, San Marino, Spain, Sweden, Turkey, Ukraine, United Kingdom of Great Britain and Northern Ireland, United States of America, Uzbekistan.

23. *The draft resolution was adopted by 67 votes to 0, with 39 abstentions.*

24. **Ms. Sall** (Finland), speaking on behalf of the European Union, reiterated the European Union's support for the efforts of the specialized agencies to provide assistance to the Non-Self-Governing Territories in the humanitarian, technical and educational fields. At the same time, the mandates of those agencies must be strictly respected. The member States of the European Union had accordingly abstained in the vote.

25. **Mr. Hunte** (Saint Lucia) said that his delegation had voted in favour of the draft resolution on the provision of assistance by the specialized agencies to Non-Self-Governing Territories, since the mandate of many of those organizations provided for such assistance.

Draft resolution relating to offers by Member States of study and training facilities for inhabitants of Non-Self-Governing Territories, submitted under agenda item 95 (A/C.4/54/L.5)

26. **The Chairman** announced that the Islamic Republic of Iran and Thailand had joined the co-sponsors of the draft resolution.

27. *The draft resolution was adopted without a vote.*

Programme budget implications of draft resolutions

28. **Mr. Sattar** (Secretary of the Committee), referring to the recommendations of the Special Committee on Decolonization (A/54/23 (Part III), chap. XIII, sects. D-F), said that their implementation would have no additional financial implications for the 2000-2001 biennium. Articles 8-11 of draft resolution A/C.4/54/L.3 would have no financial implications on the regular programme budget.

Draft resolution relating to the question of Western Sahara, submitted under agenda item 18 (A/C.4/54/L.3)

29. *The draft resolution was adopted without a vote.*

30. **Ms. Silfverberg** (Finland), speaking on behalf of the European Union, the associated countries Bulgaria, Cyprus, the Czech Republic, Estonia, Hungary, Latvia, Lithuania, Poland, Romania, Slovakia and Slovenia, and, in addition, Iceland and Norway, said that the European Union welcomed the adoption without a vote of the resolution on Western Sahara and reiterated its support for the United Nations settlement plan, recalling, in that connection, its declaration on that issue of 21 June 1999.

31. The European Union looked forward to a speedy finalization of the identification and appeals processes in order that the referendum might take place in accordance with the provisional timetable. It shared the opinion of the Secretary-General that despite some delays, the process thus far testified to the intention of both parties to maintain progress towards the referendum.

32. The European Union welcomed the appointment of the new Special Representative of the Secretary-General and the new Deputy Special Representative, as well as the new Chairman of the Identification Commission, and expressed its full support to them.

33. The European Union urged parties to cooperate fully with the Secretary-General, his Personal Envoy and Special Representative, in order to further all aspects of the settlement plan. The parties' cooperation with the United Nations Mission for the Referendum in Western Sahara (MINURSO) continued to be of utmost importance, and to play a decisive role in the peace process.

34. **Mr. Snoussi** (Morocco), explaining his position after the adoption of the resolution, expressed his appreciation for the draft submitted by the Chairman, which had enabled the usual petty conflicts to be avoided and considerable time to be gained. The position of the Government of Morocco was that the question of Western Sahara was not an issue of decolonization, but of preserving the territorial integrity of Morocco. In that connection, the Government of Morocco

did not consider itself bound by those provisions of the adopted resolution which referred to decolonization. The issue was being decided by the Security Council, which had drafted several legislative instruments defining a framework for the relevant process. Morocco stressed its willingness to cooperate with bodies established by the Security Council with the aim of working towards a just, transparent and democratic referendum, and would, to that end, continue to support the work of MINURSO; it counted upon its partners to ensure, *inter alia*, the registration of refugees and their protection, as well as their free participation in the referendum. The Government of Morocco considered that former and current inhabitants of the territory and those with blood ties to the territory would be given the opportunity of voicing their opinions in accordance with the principle of self-determination.

Draft decision relating to the question of Gibraltar, submitted under agenda item 18 (A/C.4/54/L.4)

35. *The draft decision was adopted without a vote.*

Draft resolution relating to the question of New Caledonia, submitted under agenda item 18 (A/54/23 (Part III), chap. XIII, sect. D)

36. **Mr. Mekdad** (Syrian Arab Republic), Rapporteur of the Special Committee on the Situation with regard to the Implementation of the Declaration on the Granting of Independence to Colonial Countries and Peoples, read out changes to the draft resolution agreed during consultations. The sixth preambular paragraph should be deleted. Paragraph 7 should be modified to read: "*Urges* all the parties involved, in the interest of all the people of New Caledonia, to maintain, in the framework of the Nouméa Accord, their dialogue in a spirit of harmony", and placed immediately following paragraph 1. Paragraph 5 should read: "*Welcomes* the fact that the administering Power invited to New Caledonia, at the time the new institutions were established, a mission of information which comprised representatives of countries of the Pacific region". In paragraph 8, line 4, the words "of the Mattignon and Nouméa Accords" should be replaced with the words "of the Nouméa Accord". Paragraph 14 should read: "*Welcomes*, in this regard, the accession by New Caledonia to the status of observer to the South Pacific Forum, continuing high-level visits to New Caledonia by delegations from countries of the Pacific region and high-level visits by delegations from New Caledonia to countries members of the South Pacific Forum".

37. *The draft resolution, as orally amended, was adopted without a vote.*

Draft resolution relating to the question of Tokelau, submitted under agenda item 18 (A/54/23 (Part III), chap. XIII, sect. E)

38. *The draft resolution was adopted without a vote.*

Draft resolution relating to the questions of American Samoa, Anguilla, Bermuda, the British Virgin Islands, the Cayman Islands, Guam, Montserrat, Pitcairn, Saint Helena, the Turks and Caicos Islands and the United States Virgin Islands (A/54/23 (Part III), chap. VIII, sect. F)

39. **Mr. Ovia** (Papua New Guinea) said in recent consultations, it had been decided that in section XI, paragraph 7, of the draft resolution — before the word "debt" — the word "appropriate" should be inserted.

40. **Mr. Dausa Cespedes** (Cuba) noted that the word "Guam" had been omitted from the announcement of the item at the meeting and from that day's *Journal*.

41. **The Chairman** apologized for the omission.

42. *The draft resolution, as orally amended, was adopted without a vote.*

43. **The Chairman** noted that the Committee had thus completed its consideration of the items relating to decolonization.

The meeting rose at 11.25 a.m.